

Message Text

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ACTION ITFE-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-06 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00 AID-05 DHA-02 ORM-01

HEW-02 FDRE-00 OMB-01 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1233

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, FR

SUBJECT: EXCHANGE WITH GOF CONCERNING INDOCHINESE REFUGEE
PROBLEMS

REF: (A) STATE 158230 (B) STATE 158799 (C) STATE 158795

SUMMARY: CONGEN AND OTHER OFFICER CALLED ON QUAI ACTING
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE CONVENTIONS AND CONSULAR
AFFAIRS, XAVIER JEANNOT, 11 JULY TO DISCUSS INDOCHINA
REFUGEE PROBLEMS. JEANNOT SAID THAT TO AVOID PROVIDING
DUPLICATE TICKETS FROM ICEM, QUAI WOULD SEND INSTRU-
CTIONS FOR CONSULATES TO MAKE SOME NOTATION IN FRENCH
DOCUMENTATION WHEN A REFUGEE'S SPONSOR HAS PROVIDED A
PRE-PAID TICKET. FRENCH ARE UNABLE TO PAY FOR TICKET
FOR REFUGEES IN FRANCE GOING TO THE U.S.; QUAI IS PRE-
PARED TO INTERVENE WITH UNHCR TO REMIND HIM OF INTER-
NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PAYING TRANSPORT TO FINAL
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SETTLEMENT. IN REFUGEE APPLICATION FRENCH WISH DETAILS

WHICH WOULD SUPPORT A CLAIM TO BE ABLE TO ADJUST IN FRANCE. FRENCH ARE STILL MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THE PACE OF ENTRY OF REFUGEES INTO FRANCE THAN THE FINAL NUMBER THEY MAY END UP ACCEPTING. THEY FEEL THAT THEY CAN NOW HANDLE THE ENTRY OF ABOUT 1,000 A MONTH IF PRESENT CONDITIONS CONTINUE. REFUGEES FROM SEA CONTINUE TO HAVE PRIORITY OVER REFUGEES WITHIN US SYSTEM. FRENCH ALREADY ARE ACCEPTING LAO UNDER THEIR INDOCHINA REFUGEE PROGRAM. END SUMMARY

1. NOTATION CONCERNING PRE-PAID TICKETS. WHEN WE RAISED QUESTION OF DUPLICATE TICKETS (REF A), JEANNOT SAID THAT WHEN GOF DISCUSSED HERE WITH RELATIVES THE ISSUANCE OF AUTHORIZATION FOR A VISA TO A REFUGEE, GOF REQUIRED PROOF OF ABILITY TO SUPPORT AND A PRE-PAID TICKET TO FRANCE. IF SPONSOR IS ABLE TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR REFUGEE, BUT WOULD ENCOUNTER HARDSHIP IN PROVIDING TICKET, GOF WILL, IN MANY CASES, STILL APPROVE THE VISA BUT WILL REFER SPONSOR TO ICEM FOR ASSISTANCE IN PROVIDING TRANSPORTATION FUNDS. POSTS IN HONG KONG, BANGKOK, ETC. AND ALSO THE U.S. ARE AWARE OF THE TICKET SITUATION IN EACH CASE. JEANNOT SAID QUAI WOULD SEND INSTRUCTIONS FOR SOME NOTATION OF THE TICKET STATUS TO BE PUT INTO THE LAISSEZ-PASSER OR VISA.

2. TICKETS FOR REFUGEES LEAVING FRANCE. WE ASKED JEANNOT ABOUT GOF WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR TRANSPORTATION OF REFUGEES LEAVING FRANCE FOR THE U.S. WHO HAD INADEQUATE FUNDS FOR TRANSPORTATION. JEANNOT SAID THAT GOF DID NOT HAVE OFFICIAL FUNDS FOR THIS PURPOSE, AND WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO GET THEM APPROPRIATED. IT WOULD PERHAPS BE POSSIBLE TO SCROUNGE FUNDS FOR A SMALL NUMBER OF SUCH PERSONS PERHAPS FROM APPEALS TO PRIVATE AGENCIES -- OR TAKING UP A COLLECTION IN THE QUAI -- BUT THE EFFORT WOULD BE MORE THAN IT WAS WORTH. SINCE WE KNOW OF MORE THAN 50 REFUGEES WHO SAID THEY WERE UNABLE TO PAY, JEANNOT SAID PAYING FOR THEIR TRAVEL WOULD CONSTITUTE A PROGRAM FOR WHICH GOF MAKE-SHIFT MEASURES WOULD BE INADEQUATE. JEANNOT SAID THAT IT WAS THE GOF OPINION THAT ONE OF THE IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNHCR WAS TO PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION TO A FINAL RESETTLEMENT COUNTRY. HE SUGGESTED THAT WE PROVIDE HIM WITH THE FACTS INCLUDING THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PERSONS TO DATE WHO SAID PURCHASE OF TICKETS WAS IMPOSSIBLE OR AN EXTREME HARDSHIP, AND THE GOF WOULD WEIGH IN WITH THE UNHCR TO FACILITATE THEIR DEPARTURE FROM FRANCE TO THE U.S. WE WILL TRY TO SUPPLY JEANNOT MORE ACCURATE STATISTICS (WE NOW BELIEVE FIGURE TO BE CLOSER TO 75

THAN TO 50). JEANNOT UNDERSTOOD AND SYMPATHIZED WITH THE U.S. DESIRE NOT TO BE PAYING FOR TRAVEL OF REFUGEES BOTH WAYS, BUT THOUGHT THAT IN BOTH CASES THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SHOULD TAKE CARE OF SUCH TRANSPORT THROUGH THE COMPETENT INTERNATIONAL AGENCY, THE UNHCR. WE SAID WE THOUGHT SUCH GOF INTERVENTION WITH UNHCR WOULD BE HELPFUL AND WE WOULD ASK WASHINGTON WHETHER THEY AGREE WITH US AND LET JEANNOT KNOW. DEPARTMENT PLEASE ADVISE ON THIS POINT.

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3. INFORMATION OF VALUE TO GOF CONCERNING APPLICANTS FOR ENTRY INTO FRANCE. JEANNOT REPEATED CHAYET'S

PREVIOUS VIEW THAT GOF WAS PRINCIPALLY CONCERNED TO HAVE REFUGEES GO WHERE THEY WOULD FIT IN BEST, WHERE THE FAMILY UNIT COULD MAKE THE BEST ADJUSTMENT. HENCE, IN ADDITION TO INFORMATION CONCERNING RELATIVE, FRIEND OR SPONSOR IN FRANCE (MENTIONED IN PARA 2, REF C), GOF WOULD FIND IT USEFUL IN EVALUATING APPLICATIONS TO KNOW THE FRENCH LANGUAGE CAPABILITY OF APPLICANT AND HIS FAMILY, EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND, PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITIES INCLUDING ABILITY TO EXERCISE A PROFESSION IN FRANCE, AND ALSO SOME DETAILS ON THE CAPABILITY OF A SPONSOR TO SUPPORT A REFUGEE. FINAL FRENCH DECISION ON THE VISA WOULD BE BASED ON ALL ASPECTS OF CASE, TO DATE, CRITERIA WERE BEING APPLIED LENIENTLY. GOF FELT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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JUSTIFIED IN BEING LENIENT BECAUSE VIETNAMESE MADE GOOD IMMIGRANTS; EVEN WHEN THE SPONSOR'S MEANS WERE LIMITED, THE VIETNAMESE EXTENDED FAMILY SYSTEM GENERALLY ASSURED THAT NEW ARRIVALS WERE ASSISTED IN GETTING SETTLED. OVER THE LONGER RUN THE VIETNAMESE HAD SHOWN THEMSELVES RESOURCEFUL AND EASILY ASSIMILABLE.

4. GENERAL ASPECTS OF FRENCH PROGRAM. JEANNOT SAID THAT GOF WAS STILL NOT WILLING -- OR ABLE -- TO FIX A NUMBER OF REFUGEES WHICH IT WOULD TAKE. AS THE SITUATION WAS EVOLVING, IT LOOKED AS THOUGH 10,000 TO 15,000 REFUGEES WOULD QUALIFY UNDER CURRENT FRENCH CRITERIA. THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM REMAINED THE PACE AT WHICH THE GOF COULD PROCESS REFUGEES THROUGH THEIR SMALL RECEPTION CENTERS -- GOF WISHED TO AVOID SETTING UP LARGE CAMPS. IN GENERAL THE GOF HOPED TO ADMIT ABOUT 1,000 A MONTH. THE QUAI HAS TOLD A NUMBER OF POSTS THE PACE AT WHICH THEY MAY ISSUE REFUGEE VISAS -- FOR EXAMPLE HK MAY PROCESS 40 A WEEK AND BANGKOK 20 A DAY. JEANNOT NOTED THAT THESE "QUOTAS" WERE BASED ON THE REFUGEE CONDITIONS IN THE VARIOUS COUNTRIES. WHILE THE FACILITIES IN HONG KONG WERE LIMITED, THE SITUATION IN THAILAND WAS MUCH WORSE. APPLICANTS COULD NOT, FOR EXAMPLE, GET TO THE FRENCH EMBASSY WITHOUT PAYING A VERY HIGH SECURITY DEPOSIT WHEN THEY LEFT A CAMP. JEANNOT COMMENTED THAT THE UNHCR SHOULD ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE THE RTG TREATMENT OF SUCH REFUGEES. JEANNOT ADDED THAT THE FRENCH PACE WAS POSITED ON THE ACCEPTABLE, EVEN THOUGH DIFFICULT, SITUATIONS IN WHICH THE REFUGEES FOUND THEMSELVES. IF THE SITUATION WERE TO TAKE A TURN FOR THE WORSE, THE GOF WOULD THEN CONSIDER SETTING UP SPECIAL CAMP FACILITIES, DRAWING ON ARMY CAMP RESOURCES, BUT THEY THOUGHT IT WOULD BE BETTER, IF POSSIBLE, TO AVOID SUCH CAMPS. IT HAD OBVIOUSLY BEEN IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE U.S. TO DO SO. JEANNOT NOTED THAT THE PRIORITY OF APPLICATION FROM

REFUGEES IN THE U.S. SYSTEM REMAINED LOWER BECAUSE OF THEIR RELATIVE SECURITY.

5. THE FRENCH HAD MADE IT VERY EASY FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES -- OR INDOCHINESE CAUGHT IN FRANCE -- TO HAVE WORK AND EXTENDED RESIDENCE PERMITS IF RPT IF THEY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CLAIMED POLITICAL ASYLUM. SOME INDOCHINESE WERE RELUCTANT TO ASK FOR THIS STATUS BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE PROBLEMS FOR THEIR RELATIVES WHO REMAINED BEHIND. FOR THE MOMENT, IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THE GOF TO BE LIBERAL IN SUCH CASES, BUT THEY WERE WORKING OUT BETTER REGULATIONS.

6. LAO REFUGEES. ACCORDING TO JEANNOT, GOF HAS NO SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR THE LAO. FRENCH PROGRAMS ARE FOR ALL INDOCHINESE, AND LAO WILL BE PROCESSED UNDER THE SAME CRITERIA WITHOUT ANY DISTINCTION.

7. ALTHOUGH JEANNOT DID NOT INDICATE WHETHER INFORMATION CONCERNING THE FRENCH PROGRAM WAS PROVIDED ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS, WE GATHERED THAT THE QUAI WOULD NOT BE OPPOSED TO A GENERALIZED PRESENTATION WHICH DID NOT CITE SOURCES. SPECIFIC QUOTAS FOR HONG KONG AND BANGKOK SHOULD NOT BE CITED, BUT OVERALL FIGURE OF ABOUT 1,000 REFUGEES A MONTH FROM ALL SOURCES COULD BE USED. ALTHOUGH FRENCH ARE STILL LEARY ABOUT PROGNOSTICATIONS ABOUT THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES WHO MAY ULTIMATELY QUALIFY FOR ENTRY INTO FRANCE UNDER CURRENT CRITERIA, WE COULD PROVIDE AS A ROUGH ESTIMATE (WHICH SEEMS REASONABLE TO US) FIGURES JEANNOT USED THAT IS 10,000 TO 15,000.
RUSH

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